

**Proposed Additional Ranking Criteria for 2012 Environmental Quality
Incentives Program, Grazing Lands (and particularly the
Lesser Prairie–Chicken Initiative)**

The Kansas Grazing Lands Coalition suggests that the following actions be listed on the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Ranking Worksheet beginning in 2012.

1. Applicants will establish plant inventory and monitoring techniques, including line transects; clipping sample plots to assess annual forage production; to establish small enclosures or “cages” to exclude livestock grazing to demonstrate current year’s plant growth and provide a sample area for total year’s forage production; and to develop an annual ranch forage inventory balance sheet.

Suggested Scoring: 5 points

2. In assessing drought impacts and monitoring climate change, applicants will enroll in the Kansas Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network (CoCoRaHS) Program and provide a 4-inch high capacity rain gauge to closely monitor moisture received on the ranch. Applicants will also sign up for the National Drought Mitigation Center’s drought planning tool, “Managing Drought Risk on the Ranch,” an on-line program to assist ranchers and graziers with drought and ranch planning.

Suggested Scoring: 5 points

3. Applicants will implement a ranch plan that includes adaptive management strategies to address drought impacts and climate change while maintaining or improving rangeland productivity as indicated by the above. An adaptive management plan will include drought management alternatives, herd management and range forage needs for livestock, and wildlife/lesser prairie–chicken habitat needs.

Suggested Scoring: 5 points

Perhaps if an applicant has completed all three actions, a cumulative score of 20 would be awarded.